

STAT

Page Denied

STAT

FIRES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA CAUSE DAMAGE
AMOUNTING TO 3 MILLION CROWNS

Prace
Prague, 21 Aug 1953

Losses caused by fires in Czechoslovakia between 10 and 20 August 1953, during the height of the harvest season, amount to 3 million crowns. Fifty large fires were reported during this period, each with a loss in excess of 10,000 crowns.

On 11 August, members of the JZD in Tlumacov, Gottwaldov Kraj, were cutting dry straw and blowing it into the loft of the communal cow barn, which had a good electric lighting system. The workers failed to notice that the straw had covered an electric light in the loft. The entire barn, containing the winter's feed supply of cut straw, burned down during the night with an estimated loss of 60,000 crowns.

On 12 August, members of the JZD (type III) in Nasedlnice, Michovske Hradiste Okres, were also cutting fresh straw and blowing it into the loft. The cutterknives were not working properly and, instead of cutting the straw, it was crushed. The result was that a bundle of straw became entangled around the red-hot crankshaft of the cutter. The bundle of straw ignited and was blown into the loft. The resulting fire destroyed the entire barn, the supply of straw, the entire crop of rye threshed from 7 hectares, 2 threshing machines, 3 sows, one horse, and a large number of pigs. The loss amounted to 700,000 crowns.

On 12 August in Krupa, Trnava Okres in Slovakia, sparks from a Skoda tractor ignited fresh straw and caused a fire which destroyed the threshing machine, 54 quintals of wheat, 63 quintals of rye, 63 quintals of barley, 15 quintals of oats, 13 quintals of vetch feed, 500 quintals of straw, 88 quintals of clover, and 4 barns. The loss amounted to 46,000 crowns. The fire was caused by lack of a muffler on the tractor's exhaust.

On 14 August, a large fire in the JZD fields at Meclov, Horsovsy Tyn Okres, was caused by a cigarette igniting freshly stacked straw in the loft of a barn. The loss was estimated at 100,000 crowns.

On 15 August, sparks from a locomobile, which did not have a spark screen on its smokestack, started a fire at the state farm in Vlkosov, Touzim Okres. The fire spread rapidly to a nearby stack of straw which was burned together with the threshing machine. The loss amounted to 70,000 crowns.

On 16 August, fire destroyed a shed containing fresh straw and farm machinery at the JZD in Nazlovske Hory, Horazdovice Okres. The fire was caused by children lighting cigarettes while playing in the straw. The loss amounted to 35,000 crowns.

The growing list of fires caused by carelessness shows a lack of communal responsibility for communal property.

STAT